

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 and 14-19 are pending after entry of this paper. Claims 1-8, 10-13, and 16-19 have been rejected. Claim 13 has been cancelled without prejudice. Applicants reserve the right to pursue cancelled claims in a continuing application.

Claims 1, 6, 9, 10, 12 have been amended. Support may be found throughout the instant specification. For example, claims 1 and 12 now incorporate the subject matter of cancelled claim 13. Claims 6, 9, and 10 have been amended to comply with proper claim format.

No new matter has been introduced by these amendments. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the pending rejections in view of the above claim amendments and below remarks are respectfully requested.

Applicants acknowledge that claims 9, 14, and 15 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Objections to the Claims

Claims 6, 9, and 10 have been objected to for informalities. The Examiner has suggested adding the term “comprising.” Applicants have amended the claims accordingly in order to address the Examiner’s concerns. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the pending objections are respectfully requested.

Response to Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-7, 10-13, 18, and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 6-226335 to Komata, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,782,120 to Wright.

Briefly, the Examiner alleges that Komata teaches the instant invention as claimed, but admits that Komata does not describe that the space is at pressure greater than the surrounding atmosphere. Komata has been combined with Wright for allegedly teaching a gaseous non-oxidizing atmosphere in an enclosure having a pressure greater than the surrounding area. However, applicants respectfully direct the Examiner's attention to independent claims 1 and 12 which have been amended to indicate that the gas-protecting member has at least one protecting member provided with at least one gas channel for feeding gas into the space left between the gas-protecting member and the feed member. Neither Komata nor Wright, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest that the gas-protecting member has a protecting member and a gas channel for feeding gas. The Examiner has equated the stationary shoe of Komata as being the gas-protecting member. However, Komata does not teach or suggest that the gas-protecting member has at least one protecting member with at least one gas channel for feeding gas. Wright does remedy the deficiencies of Komata because Wright describes a non-oxidizing gaseous atmosphere in the hood, and does not describe a gas channel for feeding gas. Therefore the combination of Komata and Wright does not teach or suggest the claimed invention. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103 rejection are respectfully requested in view of the present claim amendments and for the reasons above.

Claim 8 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 6-226335 to Komata, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,782,120 to Wright and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,834,199 to Rouyer. Specifically, the Examiner admits that Komata and Wright do not disclose preheating the gas, and uses Rouyer for teaching that it was known to preheat gas in order to isolate a material from oxidation. Applicants respectfully disagree.

As previously mentioned, Komata and Wright do not teach the claimed method or equipment for continuous extrusion of a metallic metal as presently claimed. The deficiencies of Komata and Wright are not remedied by the teachings of Rouyer. The combination of Komata, Wright and Rouyer does not teach or suggest the claimed invention as presented herein. Therefore, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103 rejection.

Claim 16 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 6-226335 to Komata, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,782,120 to Wright and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,637,249 to Heikkila. Specifically, the Examiner admits that Komata and Wright do not disclose a lining, and uses Heikkila for teaching that it was known to provide a lining to both sides of a groove. Applicants respectfully disagree.

As previously mentioned, Komata and Wright do not teach the claimed method or equipment for continuous extrusion of a metallic metal as presently claimed. The deficiencies of Komata and Wright are not remedied by the teachings of Heikkila. The combination of Komata, Wright and Heikkila does not teach or suggest the claimed invention as presented herein. Therefore, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103 rejection.

Claim 17 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Komata, et al. in view of Wright and Heikkila and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,650,408 to Anderson, et al. Specifically, the Examiner admits that Komata in view of Wright and Heikkila does not disclose that a lining is the same material as the extrusion material, and uses Anderson for teaching that it was known to provide a lining that is the same material as the extrusion material. Applicants respectfully disagree.

As previously mentioned, Komata and Wright do not teach the claimed method or equipment for continuous extrusion of a metallic metal as presently claimed. The deficiencies of Komata, Wright, and Heikkila are not remedied by the teachings of Anderson. The combination of Komata, Wright, Heikkila, and Anderson does not teach or suggest the claimed invention as presented herein. Therefore, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103 rejection.

Dependent Claims

The applicants have not independently addressed all of the rejections of the dependent claims. The applicants submit that for at least similar reasons as to why independent claim(s) 1 and 12 from which all of the dependent claims 2-11 and 14-19 depend are believed allowable as discussed *supra*, the dependent claims are also allowable. The applicants however, reserve the right to address any individual rejections of the dependent claims and present independent bases for allowance for the dependent claims should such be necessary or appropriate.

Thus, applicants respectfully submit that the invention as recited in the claims as presented herein is allowable over the art of record, and respectfully request that the respective rejections be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims and allowance of this application. Favorable action by the Examiner is earnestly solicited.

AUTHORIZATION

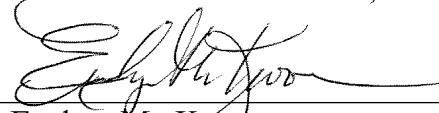
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for consideration of this Amendment to Deposit Account No. **13-4500**, Order No. 4872-4750.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No. **13-4500**, Order No. 4872-4750.

Respectfully submitted,
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